

Australia: Electoral members support SEP campaign against party registration ban

Our reporters
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The *World Socialist Web Site* is today publishing statements from electoral members of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) in Australia opposing the Australian Electoral Commission's (AEC) rejection of the SEP's application for registration as an official political party.

The AEC's refusal is a blatant attack on democratic rights and part of a broader campaign by the political establishment to suppress opposition and entrench the two-party system. It comes as support for both Labor and the Liberal-National Coalition has fallen dramatically.

The SEP will hold a public meeting on March 19 to outline the party's fight against this ban and its broader campaign to build a socialist alternative to war, austerity and the assault on workers' rights. It will provide a sharp political analysis of the escalating global crisis and the ruling class's deepening turn toward repression. Register here.

Bernard, a longstanding electoral member from Melbourne, said, "I joined the SEP as an electoral member to give support to its genuinely socialist perspective on national and international issues. The AEC's decision to bar the SEP's party registration as a legitimate participant in the forthcoming election is unconscionable and patently undemocratic.

"The collusion in this of the two erstwhile parties of government is yet another indication of the diminishment of faith in both as promoting the welfare and interests of the Australian populace. Their flagging popular support is bringing them to attempt to delegitimise other parties and voices.

"This is of a piece with various arts and media governing bodies' punishment and suppression of Randa Abdel-Fattah and Antoinette Lattouf."

Andre, a mental health nurse in Melbourne, said, "I joined the SEP because I want to see change. I want to see just fairness, really. As a nurse, I witness extreme social inequality daily, with patients unable to afford the treatment they need. It's deeply unfair.

"The rejection of the Socialist Equality Party's application by the Australian Electoral Commission is another example of this injustice. The process took four months, which is an unusual amount of time, and then it was rejected on the basis of four people saying that they weren't members.

"There's no accountability in this process, no way to verify who these individuals were. Instead of a simple re-evaluation, the system is designed to keep the Socialist Equality Party from registering and designed to keep a socialist voice out of Parliament completely.

"This legislation has been set up by the two-party system, and they obviously don't want other parties coming in. Labor and Liberal are just dead in the water, those two parties don't represent working people at all. You only have to go shopping to see that—inflation and the cost of living are out of control.

"In addition, they're defunding hospitals, they're defunding the NDIS, they're defunding social programs which are the safety net holding the community together.

"The only real alternative is a socialist perspective because inequality is now impossible to ignore. You see it in the rising homelessness, in young people without jobs turning to crime and in the increasing police presence. The current system offers no solutions, yet, figures like Clive Palmer can buy their way into politics while the Socialist Equality Party is blocked."

Pointing to the broader crackdown on democratic rights, Andre said, "The suspension of funding for Randa Abdel-Fattah is a politically motivated attack. It

lacks transparency and there is no legitimate reason to suspend her funding. It is the same as AHPRA being weaponised against doctors and nurses. Protesting genocide and mass human rights violations should be a democratic right, but anyone who speaks out is targeted.”

Peita, a retired teacher aide, wrote, “The SEP, as a political organisation, has a democratic right to establish a socialist alternative to the two main political parties and the prevailing political ruling class. Their commitment to challenging the corrupt and entrenched political establishment is crucial in offering an alternative vision for society; one that stands against the agenda of war mongering, genocide and the growing power of the billionaire and elitist classes.

“The SEP has met all the required membership numbers and has fulfilled all other onerous criteria for party registration set forth by the AEC. Their dedication to advancing the interests of the working class, promoting global peace and fighting for social and economic justice should be both applauded and recognised. It is vital that all political voices, including those that seek to challenge the status quo, are given the opportunity to stand in the political arena. The SEP represents a much-needed alternative to the disastrous policies of the current political establishment, and I fully support their registration for the upcoming election.”

Election ban on the SEP: An attack on democratic rights

WHEN: 7 p.m. (AEDT) Wednesday, March 19

WHERE: Lansdowne Rooms, Bankstown Library, Bankstown, NSW

Reserve your seat now!

For those unable to attend in person, the event will also be live-streamed via Zoom.

Read our statement against the decision here.



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact